

ABSTRACT

Embodiments of the invention improve upon current systems by allowing users to dynamically generate and repeatedly modify the appearance of any set of tabular data. When the system obtains input relating to formatting the table, the appearance of the table is dynamically modified so the users can instantaneously view any changes to the table caused by the input (e.g., WYSIWYG). Users provide input (e.g., layout information) that relates to various types of pivot operations, sorting operation, and/or merging operations performed on the table. The user may, for example, select a certain field and then initiate a pivot operation using the selected field. The system is configured in accordance with one embodiment of the invention so that the layout information is stored independent of and/or associated with the table data.